

## God's Tithes and Offerings, Pt. 2

Ronald Weinland

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It's great to be in the UK today!

This is *Part 2* of the series entitled *God's Tithes and Offerings*. I think you have to wait a little while to hear *Part 1*. Maybe next Sabbath. Should be up next week.

So, this is *Part 2* of the new series entitled *God's Tithes and Offerings*.

This series is addressing our attitude, our spirit concerning how we think toward God, and the great mercy, patience, blessings, favor, and overall grace that He gives to us. This, even though we're going into this and looking at it, a lot of it in a physical way because of what had always been commanded in times past, it's much more than just tithes and offerings. It's about much more than that, and it is about our spirit, our attitude, and our mind toward God and all the blessings He gives to us. Because everything is God's, which is mentioned in *Part 1*.

But our perception of that and our appreciation of that and our understanding of that is something that begins to develop actually through the process of tithing if we will let it. We begin to grow and understand and appreciate that more and more, that God has given us everything.

When you think of the calling we have, and the reality of what God has placed before us to inherit all things, we can't grasp that. But what we have now is awesome indeed, and sometimes our growing in that and our appreciation of that it just takes time, it takes spiritual growth, and it's a process of growing to understand how much God has poured out upon us since He's called us, as He called us and has blessed us to continue in the Body of Christ.

So again, this subject involves our spirit, our attitude toward God, which is about our true attitude toward the relationship, the fellowship that He's offered each of us from the very beginning of our calling. That's when it starts. That's when we can begin to develop in that and grow in that. And if we don't do the most basic of things, which this starts out being very basic because to us it's very physical when we're first called.

When we are called and we begin to learn that we don't work seven days a week, for some who are that presents a problem. Because it's a matter of economics, it's a matter of rent, it's a matter of making a payment, it's a matter of insurance, it's a matter of gasoline, it's a matter of a car, whatever it is, transportation, it's a matter of food. Those things dig in deeply because human beings, we can kind of live on the edge in many ways. We live in a world, a fast-moving world the way things are, a lot of people live from paycheck to paycheck. That's just the way it is. That's getting even more so now than it has in times past.

So, when we come to a point like this where God says, no, you don't work seven days a week, and then we learn that there is tithing.

When I was first called, my wife was in the Church, we had what was called a third tithe as well every three years in a seven-year cycle. So the third year and the sixth year was the third tithe year, and then the seventh year, release, freedom from that in that respect, and then another three years starting a new count. So, it was a seven-year cycle, ever how you want to look at it.

Then Herbert Amrstrom addressed that later on, I can't remember when, but basically almost toward the end of his ministry, that that was no longer required because that is a matter of government. It's their responsibility. I don't want to go into all that, but again, he made that decision at that particular time and understanding that third tithe was totally different in how it was to be administered. It's a matter of government. First and second isn't.

So, we're going to be talking about some of those things, again, that are very physical, but we learn from that. That's how we begin to learn. Baby steps, if you will, when we're first called into the Church. It tries us, it tests us to see where we are, and it helps us to grow and at times to receive correction so that we can grow and continue on. So, it's a matter of growth.

Last Sabbath we ended the sermon as we were covering a very sobering area of scripture that was addressing how some have approached their relationship toward God when it comes to giving to Him tithes and offerings. It hasn't been really good in the history of the Church. And when you think of all that has happened through time in the past two thousand years, to understand, to really grasp and comprehend that the majority of people who have ever been called have left, and a lot of it begins here. This is where people begin to have problems and difficulties with some of the battles that take place. And that can try us. What are we made of? How much do we want what God has given to us? And if we continue to respond to God, He gives us blessings of growth in conquering and overcoming.

Let's turn over to Malachi 1 which we looked at this past Sabbath in *Part 1*. Malachi 1:6. We're going to be looking at some other verses later here farther on into Malachi as well, but this is where it begins in Malachi basically.

**Malachi 1:6—A child honors their father, a servant their master. If I then am your Father, Where is My honor?** That's an awesome thing for God to say, to even bring out the matter of "your Father." Because this is on a spiritual plane. This is something that they didn't fully comprehend in the Old Testament in that regard as we do in the New Testament in the sense of what Christ revealed about his Father, our Father, and what was given to us in that understanding as far as the God Family.

So, he says, **Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My fear?** So, if it be an employer, as an example, closest thing we can get that in that respect in many ways when you think about a "master" and a servant, someone hired to do a job. And if someone isn't of a mindset where they fear doing

different than what he has told us, or she has told us as far as whoever is the boss, then we have problems and the possibility of being fired, obviously, and on and on it goes.

But anyway, generally that's the attitude that people have. It's a matter of showing respect because of who they are, that they have hired us, and we want to do a good job for them. At least that should be the spirit, and mind, and attitude that we don't see very much of in this world today.

He says, "Where is My fear?" God Almighty having to say this. And as a whole, this isn't really directed to Israel in any fashion or form. This is directed to the Church. So many things that were given in the Old Testament, they weren't for Israel. I think of the tabernacle, and Moses with them, and the law that was given. They couldn't keep it. They couldn't live it. They couldn't grasp and understand what it pictured because it's a spiritual thing and it teaches us. That's where we begin our growth and understanding, and then we begin to grasp the spirit of it in time.

He says, "Where is My Fear?" So, it involves fear to do opposite or different from what someone has told us, from what God has told us. It's also a matter of respect and honor that's given to someone. I have etched in my mind one time hearing two people in a store, convenience store there in the States many, many years ago, but it just hit me like a ton of bricks, their attitude. They were complaining about UPS.

They were talking about how bad they were in their structure, in their organization, and they were complaining and griping about their job and so forth and I thought, how dumb can you be? You're not the head of the corporation. You're not even in the management of any of the corporation and here you are criticizing something that is extremely successful and paying high wages – as a whole they do – for the job and work you do. And you think, that was so typical of so many people and attitudes that are there, criticizing someone else, criticizing the boss because there is always a better way of doing something.

Well, there isn't always a better way of doing something. Sometimes there may be in a certain area, something may be different in one area from another, but they have to have an overall thing to guide and direct a corporation like that and the people who work in it. So, that hit me in a hard way because I almost wanted to go up there and talk to them, but I didn't.

So, you think, how much more God Almighty? How can we find fault in anything? And yet some of this that we're going through is what happens to human beings when we don't like what God has given to us, or we don't want to do it the way God has given to us, or we don't want to do it the way the minister said it, or the Church has given to us to do it. Yet it comes from God if we understand it because there are those things that God has given to administer and decisions have to be made.

I think of make-up oftentimes. I go back to that and think that's where we begin to learn it in a big way if we could within the Church, in Worldwide, to realize it was an administrative thing for the sake of the

Church, for the sake of unity and oneness within the Church that Herbert Amrstrong able to make various decisions back and forth if need be, which he did.

And some learned from that, and many left over it, over something so puny and so small. You think, what a horrible thing. Because they didn't like it. Because they didn't see God. They saw a man who made the decision, an administrative decision, forgetting or never really knowing or acknowledging it that it was God's apostle and all the truth that was given to the Church came through him. Incredible!

**If I then am Your Father, where is My honor? That God should have to ask us that? And if I am your Master, where is My fear? asks the Eternal of hosts, To you priests who despise My name.** You think, what an incredible thing to say! But that's what God is molding and fashioning within us. We're called a royal priesthood in the Church. That's what God is molding and fashioning within us, a royal priesthood to serve God on a plane that is far above the angelic realm, in Elohim. Incredible! God's Family!

**Yet you say, In what way have we despised or shown contempt to Your name?** Again here, He starts out in a very basic way addressing some of this, but it goes much deeper, much deeper than tithes and offerings.

**You offer defiled food on My altar, but say, In what way have we defiled You? By saying, The table of the Eternal is contemptible.** Now, they couldn't understand this. If this was said to anyone at any point in time in Israel, the Levites, or whomever, they couldn't understand what that was about because it's a spiritual thing, and it's to the Church, it's to God's people who have God's holy spirit. That this is oftentimes to the majority through time, this is what has happened. It's an attitude of mind toward God in saying that what He is giving to us, what He is offering us is taken in a contemptible attitude. But people can't say that without God's...well, even with God's spirit to see it. You have to have God's spirit to grasp it and comprehend what that is.

So, one's approach in attitude and thinking toward God, about God, oftentimes is not God that an individual is looking at. It's the immediate moment, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes. It's maybe the government within the Church or whatever it might be.

So again, one's approach to giving tithes and offerings too often has not reflected the kind of honor, the thinking about it when it's been given, as it should have been toward the wealth that God has given to us from His table. There is an incredible difference there, what we give back that's already God's. I don't want to go back through *Part 1* again, but again, it has to do with an attitude of mind of understanding everything comes from God, and He asks for a ten percent to be given back to Him, and a ten percent that is His that's given to us to use on Holy Days or Holy Day season.

And so, we can begin to grasp the overall spirit of this by what He's saying when it talks about tithes, because to us as human beings, this is a very physical thing. But it's the mind. You know, God's concerned about the heart, what's in the mind, how we think toward Him. That's what this all really boils

down to, it's our attitude toward God Almighty. The appreciation, the love, the thankfulness for what He's given and what He promises to give us that's so far beyond our comprehension.

When we begin to grasp that and hold on to it more and more, to understand how wealthy we are. Sometimes even when we talk about tithes and He talks about what He's going to do, "Prove Me now herewith . . . Do it, put it to work, and see if I don't pour out upon you a blessing."

Well, you know what some of the greatest of those blessings are, if we comprehend it, it's what He gives us in the mind to know, to see, and to understand. But we tend to look at the physical and God blesses us there as well through time. But we tend to think of those things more physically than we do spiritually because it's far more than that.

The wealth? I think of the truths that God has given to us. To see and to understand all that we do more than anyone in time over the past six thousand years. Sometimes that's hard to hit us as it should, how richly blessed we are. To understand that we know more than the apostles did, that God has given us more to comprehend?

I think of all that John wrote and he didn't understand what he wrote in the book of Revelation. He didn't comprehend any of that as a whole. He didn't even know that those things written to the seven Churches were for seven periods of time to follow. They were still looking for Christ's coming at that point in time and every era has. Incredible! And to understand we're down, we've gone through seven? Awesome! To understand where we are in time, that we're able to look at the world and realize now we're at a point where we can annihilate ourselves, where God does have to intervene to stop us from fully destroying ourselves? It's incredible to comprehend those things, it really is.

How blessed are we? The table that God has placed before us, the food that's on it, the abundance that's on it?

**Verse 8—So, when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, is that not evil?** So, someone who didn't offer a blind sacrifice, and for those who give offerings and it's not even associated with animals and so forth. This can oftentimes just go right over the top of the head. "Well, we don't offer animals. We don't offer the blind, the lame, and so forth," and not understanding it's the attitude, it's what's inside that reveals this kind of attitude, this kind of thinking. It doesn't have to be something that's blind. It doesn't have to be something that's lame. It's the mind and how we see it, of what we're giving to God. That's what God is addressing.

**So, when you offer the lame and sick, is that not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Will he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably? asks the Eternal of hosts. But earnestly seek God's favor, for He is merciful to us.** What an awesome thing to come to understand God's mercy more and more as we grow more and more, how merciful God is, how patient God is, that we can repent, constantly, continually repent of anything and everything in our lives. The most important thing is to do

it quickly, to fight against our human nature, our carnal human nature, and that God forgives us. To have that kind of confidence, that kind of boldness, to know the kind of love that He has, and we grow in that.

It goes on to say here, **Because this is being done by your hands, will he accept you favorably? says the Eternal of hosts.** I think of what I mentioned in *Part 1* there about Cain and Abel. It was a difference in attitude. It was a difference in thinking toward God that separated the two. Cain was rejected because of what was in the mind.

**Who even among you would shut the doors, yes, would not kindle fire on My altar for nothing? I have no pleasure in you, says the Eternal of hosts, nor will I accept an offering from your hands.** So again here, it can come down to sometimes then, just as with Cain, that if our thinking and our attitude isn't right God doesn't honor it. It's not about the money. It's not about how much it is. It's not about how big the offering is or how small it is; it's what's up here in our thinking toward God, why we do the things we do. Not just in that but in everything. It's much, much broader. This is just where it starts in our learning.

Malachi 3; let's turn over there. I don't want to spend too much time in Chapter 1 because we've already gone through that in *Part 1*. So, leading up here to **Malachi 3:1** it says, **Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me.** We understand in part when it talks about some of this a little bit later as well, but, you know, to understand the different things that God was going to do and did through time.

I think of John the Baptist and what he did, and Christ made it very clear that he was, he fulfilled that in part. That's what God has done in his first coming, preparing the way for those people who were, some of them, called into the Church later on. Not all by any measure but for those who would be there in Jerusalem as well when Christ came back into Jerusalem and they threw out palm branches and so forth and saying, crying out to the one who was the son of David, in essence, of the lineage of David, recognizing that it was about the Messiah.

That's what they were talking about. That's what they were rejoicing in, that John the Baptist had told them, "This is he. This is the one that we've been looking for." And yet not understanding he's going to die and he's not going to return for two thousand years. No comprehension of that one by any measure.

**...and he shall prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, the Messenger of the covenant.** So he is, he fulfills it all, Christ does. This is what it builds up to. He fulfills it all as being the Messenger, in that respect, and all that's going to be given for the next one thousand one hundred years that comes through him in a very powerful way. All the truth and knowledge that's going to be understood then, incredible!

**Behold, he shall, or he will come, says the Eternal of hosts.** And so, we await his second coming. It's what we're waiting for. To recognize where we are in time. To me, I'm always moved by names, and even the name "Preparing for the Kingdom of God," and understanding what that is all about. That here we

all, a small bunch that God is working with to finish off the 144,000, to complete the building. And to think, what an awesome blessing to have come through an apostasy and then be awakened from what we fell into at that particular time, and then God to call even others who would even take the place of some who continued on for a time. That's a marvel to understand as well and take soberly when it talks about "Let no one take your crown."

To understand we have lived through that still since the Apostasy that there were those who just quit, those who turned against God, turned against Christ. Some who had been called afterward to have the opportunity to be molded and fashioned because it takes years, not weeks and months, to be molded and fashioned into what we are to become in order to be in God's Kingdom. Anyway, awesome!

**But who may or who will be yet abiding in the day of His coming?** So again here, in the world, physically, yes, and even within the environment of the Church, who is going to be remaining, who will be there when he actually returns? Well, that's what I've been crying out about for several years now, and stronger probably in the last two to three years because it just continues on and the warnings and giving warnings.

Even last year's Feast to me was a very powerful Feast because it helped us to understand judgment, that there is judgment, personal judgment. Each one of us, we're accountable for what we do, and yet that hasn't been taken as seriously over time within the Church as it should have been, as it could have been, possibly, but we weren't there yet either.

So, to understand there is an accounting for everything that happens. That's why to me it's almost unimaginable that over the past three years we've still had situations where people haven't saved first tithe as they should, send in a pittance of what I know they're making. You don't have to be a genius to figure some things out. Not that we try to in any fashion or form, but some things just jump out at you, like, what is wrong here? Incredible! And to realize that that's a very physical thing, but there are many other things that people have left over, but that one generally suffers with it as well.

So, whatever it is that someone wants, a relationship, a wrong relationship, think they have to leave the Church in order to have that relationship. Sometimes they do because it's a matter of sin, what they're doing, especially if they're married. They're out of the Church.

But to make those kinds of choices it's almost mind-boggling, that anyone could do something like that. And yet that's the history of God's Church. That's all I've known since I've been in God's Church. Those are the things that strike the hardest and the deepest, is that those things have always existed, the different reasons. Alcoholism, pornography, going after someone else that's really forbidden in that respect as far as God's word is concerned, lying to God, cheating before God tithes and offerings, whatever it might be, not doing it. All those kinds of things that take so many people out, and yet it just continues on.

Then to know this is going to happen right up to Christ's coming. Someone is going to fill the shoes of someone who refuses God all the way up to that point in time. The only thing is it doesn't happen at that moment; it's been going ongoing for a long time. Those things don't happen overnight when someone turns against Christ, turns against the truth that God has given to them through Christ's suffering for them, to give them opportunity to repent. I mean, that should be in our minds, those who are converted deeply, this is unthinkable, this is unimaginable. How? How could such a thing happen?! It's abhorrent! And yet it goes on almost every week of recent time here. At that pace, not a good sign.

So, "who will abide," as it says in Hebrew, "Who will yet be abiding the day of His coming?" That's literally what it says. So, we understand there's going to be a lot of suffering in the world. It has to be whittled down to size. That which fights against and is so perverted and so distorted that it's not the way to start the Millennium, it's not the way to start Christ's reign and rule on the earth. It's better that they die. Those who are destroying the earth who have no desire for peace, who have no desire even on a physical plane to stop doing what they're doing, better that they die. What is left? A third? A fourth? We don't know.

But it's not going to be a third. That gets destroyed in just one of the events alone. That's destroyed. I'm talking about is destroyed. Then when Christ returns and the 144,000, how many there? Another third? More? We don't know. So, who is going to be left?

So, in the world and in the Church it's a time of judgment. That, to me, is one of the most incredible things. When I think about judgment and I think about everything that the Old Testament says, and then I think about how the world, the protestant world looks at judgment and they read certain things about "time of judgment" and so forth, they just are so, so, so far away from any ability to grasp and comprehend any of it. They don't grasp that it's talking about two primary times of judgment that God exercises judgment on this earth.

He did it once in a flood. We understand that looking back. But what is written in the Bible in the sense of the Old Testament that was written after the flood, all those things that took place in the sense of what they said would come to pass, when it speaks about a judgment that's coming upon the earth, this is it. This is one of them.

The next one is at the end of the Hundred Years. Awesome to understand, to comprehend such a thing, that we live in the time of one of the major judgments upon mankind at the end of the age. That's what God's going to do. He's exercising His judgment upon the earth. Who deserves to continue on? Well, nobody does. Everybody deserves death. That's not the point.

It's all about God's Kingdom, the ruling of God's Kingdom, and what's going to make for the ability to begin addressing that more quickly from the very beginning, of people who are able to be humbled because of what they suffer through. Because it takes that in a very big way to begin what God is going to begin. Beautiful!

**Who shall stand, or be standing when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like a launderer's soap.** So, in part on a very physical way, this is going to happen to the earth, but even more so it's about the Church. Because we go through that, the refining of the mind, the refining of our lives and how we think, the bringing of the dross to the surface so that it can be gotten rid of. The launderer's soap, to be cleansed, to have white garments. That's why the scriptures talk about that, the white garments. Because it's about being cleansed, cleansed of sin.

**He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; He shall purify the children of Levi.** It's not about a physical tribe, it's about a spiritual Body.

**Verse 7—Even from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances.** Well, we can get stuck in the Old Testament and look back through time, what the Israelites did, and shouldn't be hard to understand that. They didn't have God's spirit. That's why there's a greater condemnation on those who have God's spirit and turn against God. That's far, far worse than what the Israelites ever did! Because of that. Because we have the impregnation of God's holy spirit. And if we turn against Christ, the very reason he died for us, was put to death for us, and we turn against what God has given to us, the truth and so forth, there is the contempt. The majority of people have had great contempt to God! That's what He's addressing here. It's the spirit, it's the mind. It's not just a physical thing of tithes and offerings. It goes much, much deeper than that. It's much broader than that. But here is where we can begin to learn these things physically, spiritually, and grow. This is the training ground. And if we grasp these things, there is an appreciation, a gratitude, a thankfulness, an awe of God, the grace He gives to us. Awesome!

**Even from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances.** So, we can grasp and comprehend what's happened in the Church over the past two thousand years. "Many have been called, few have been chosen" through that period of time. Few have chosen God all the way to the end to the point of death. That's what our choice is. Are we going to hold on all the way to the end, hold on to the way of life He's given to us, love it, appreciate it, love Him, love His Son, love His people?

**Return unto Me.** That's all it takes. Repent. That's how we do it. We repent whenever we see things in us that are wrong, and we should always be learning that.

Something happened to me this past week that I did, and I saw something in myself that I hated, and I intend never to repeat it again in a response I had to someone in the world. I realize I'm not going to have that, period. It's wrong.

So, we grow spiritually. We see things that are motivated and come out up here in the mind. This is where we have to fight it. All we have to do is repent and ask God for help. Never again. Never again.

**...and I will return unto you, says the Eternal of hosts.** So, what a beautiful thing that God continues to refine us. Because that's what we go through, He continues to show us, every one of us, things in us that

need to be refined. I don't care where we are in our growth or how long we've been or growing, there is always more. You'll never see it all that's in the mind that God sees. Thankfully, He has great mercy upon us and brings us to what point, and He says "Now, I know you," even when He knows what we're going to do and when it comes to various sin. Because there are certain things we haven't conquered in the mind. Not physical. Not some of the heinous outward things that so often happen.

**Repent and I will return to you, says the Eternal of hosts. But you have said, Wherein shall we return?**

"What is there to repent of?" That's what's being asked. "What is there to repent of?" That's a horrible thing if we get to a point, if anyone gets to that point, but that's what happens. People aren't trying to repent when they get to a certain point, when they ignore God and begin to quench God's holy spirit.

I think of Herbert Armstrong talking about we're like a babe in the womb. I think of the umbilical cord, and if you start squeezing it off, that blood flow, not going to develop properly. That's what happens with God's spirit. We begin to pinch off, quench the spirit, to begin tightening that area that's feeding us. We can't long endure something like that. We have to have God's spirit day by day, truly. Yet God has patience with us at times. From time to time, week to week, month to month maybe before we come to a point of seeing something. Then it gets better and better as we get into that habit, that flow.

And so, it asks the questions, asked the question here, **Will a person rob God?** So, it goes back to that because within the majority of people within the Church even, let alone the world, that this has happened to in times past, that not being fully faithful or truthful to God, this is where it says it. Can we see that? Can we grasp that if we rob God? Because that should be the last thing on earth that would be in our minds within the Church.

Again, it's not just about tithes and offerings. I think of how God reveals to us we receive His grace, and the scriptures reveal to us in a very powerful way, which is a matter of God's favor, God's mercy, God's love, forgiveness of sin, all those things, but it reveals to us that we're to live that as well. We're not just to be on the receiving end of what God gives to us selfishly and receive what we can get from the Church or whatever it might be from God and have this piece of mind we think we have in a perverted way toward God because if we continue to go through the motions of everything and go to the Feast every year and go to Sabbath services, that somehow we're in the Church.

That doesn't prove anyone is in the Church of God at all. Not at all. It's what's inside; it's what's inside that reveals. It's God's spirit. If God's spirit is in us reveals whether we're in the Church of God, if it's working within the spirit that we've been begotten with.

Again here, to receive from God His grace, His mercy, forgiveness of sin, and we don't show the same to others, what are we learning? What have we learned? We don't show grace to others? That's a part of what hit me last week here. I don't care who it is in the world around us, let alone especially in the Church, but that's exactly what we're to learn. That's what the new testament teaches. We're to grow in grace, which doesn't mean we're to grow in greater favor.

Yes, we want to draw closer to God and all those things, but it's about what we, how we respond to that grace, and whether or not we are growing in that same kind of mind and attitude, that it's working through us to the benefit of others. That we're forgiving of others. What is it to receive forgiveness of our sins and we don't have a forgiving attitude toward others? Where we just want to find fault in what others are doing and never forgetting it and never letting go of it. Because that's sin, and we can't do that.

And so, whether it be that or whatever it might be, you know, in relationships within the Church as an example. Merciful, being merciful to someone? God is merciful to us; we should be merciful to others when they've done something to us that's wrong. Do people do things that are wrong? Yeah. We stumble, we say something that we didn't think about or just didn't think as we should have. Sometimes those things happen within the Church. Again, if we don't live those things we're robbing God. Because His Son was given for a purpose, so that we could be forgiven of sin so that He and His Son could dwell in us so we could live grace, God's way toward others. It's beautiful if we understand it and live it.

He says, **You have robbed Me. But you say, In what way have we robbed you?** And so, He goes back to the most basic of things, **in tithes and offerings**. Because eventually, this will happen in the process. Inevitably, regardless of what it is that takes someone away from the truth or they allow to be taken from it.

It goes on to say in **verse 9—Therefore, you are cursed with a curse**. It's a result of sin and not repenting. That's just an automatic thing. Things aren't going to go right. Not only that but in time if we're not careful, especially because we're impregnated with God's spirit, God lets us know we're let back out into a world where there are spirit beings that can have free ride – where they don't in the Church. Where we can cry out to God when we know we're being bombarded perhaps or things. We can pray about those things and ask God for protection from that world.

It tells us that we're to draw close to God and He will draw close to us. And we're to flee, in that regard. And so, it talks about those things to obey God and how that Satan and the demonic world really don't have that power over us. They really don't. They can't if we're close to God. But if we cut ourselves off from God's spirit, He'll allow that to happen, and everyone who leaves, that happens to them, things happen to their minds.

I think about the judgment that's yet to come. Depends... I don't know how far they've gone. Each one is separate as to how they think, what they've done. But some have made the kind of a choice and a mind that they're going to answer for in time. Because that doesn't automatically change. That's why I love the scripture that says, "Can you kill Christ twice?" Can you put him to death twice? When you go too far? Sometimes people just go too far. That's an exceedingly dangerous thing when you have the impregnation of God's spirit in you. There are those who never really had that as well.

**You have robbed Me, even this whole nation.** And so, it's looking at the prospect of it and saying, this is what's happened. "You have robbed Me." So even within the Church, you look at the majority have left, you think, same thing could be said on a spiritual plane.

So it says, **Bring all the tithes into the treasury** (storehouse) **that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now herewith.** So again, this matter of proving as a matter of putting it to the test, live it, do it. Just do it.

I mentioned last Sabbath here about it's amazing how many things that we can do in life sometimes that if we just do it, certain things that are given to us, guidelines and directions within the Church, whatever it might be, and we don't understand it at the time. Sometimes I've seen it happen with people in simple things like clothing or hair or whatever it might be, some of the things God gives some very simple, basic, physical instruction about.

Then after someone does it for a time then they begin to respond later on, and they see something that they couldn't see before until they actually did it. Then something happens in the mind, the blessing that God gives in being able to understand why certain guidelines are given where we can say, "Now, I understand." But sometimes until a person does that the mind won't change because they think a certain way that isn't sound or balanced. And so, God shows us what soundness and balance is. Then after we live that soundness and balance for a time with God's spirit we begin to have those "Ah ha" moments where we understand it. Incredible! And so it is here, things that we can begin to see on a spiritual plane that we don't otherwise see even far and above just the physical aspect of it.

**That there may be food in My house, and prove me now herewith, says the Eternal of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing on you so that you shall not have room enough to receive it.** That doesn't mean it happens right now. But when you know it in the mind?

Candidly, I think about the universe, and I think about why it's there. It says we're going to inherit all things. Where are you going to put it? So vast. So great. We don't even begin to comprehend that, what it means yet. It's so far above and beyond to think God calls them all by name. Some of those sermons I've given in times past I love when you start going into the numbers and the vastness of what's out there. This is so puny we can't really grasp it, how great it really is.

So, if we can see beyond and understand what God is saying, "Yes, I believe You. I get that. Thank You." It's not a matter of how wealthy we're going to be in this life, and yet if we really grasp that we are incredibly wealthy. If we don't get what we have been given in truth and understanding as people over six thousand years, now more than ever before, we've got problems spiritually. We really do!

To understand that we have more than anyone at any time in times past, more than Moses, more than Daniel, more than the prophets, more than the apostles, in understanding and grasping of things about God's plan and God's purpose, how blessed are we? Do we deserve that? No. We just happen to live at

that time when this is what's being given to the Church because of where we are in time. We just happen to live at an incredible time. To see the end of six thousand years, to come to a point in time where we are convicted in powerful ways that mankind can't rule himself? To see that we have the potential and will in time no matter what we're going to destroy ourselves except God intervenes? And we believe that with all of our being then? That's awesome that we're able to do that.

**Verse 11—And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground,** as in the cultivation of land, in other words. So, always using physical examples to teach us something spiritual. **Neither shall your vine cast forth her fruit before it's time in the fields, says the Eternal of hosts.** I think of that which we are able to grow in spiritually. No one can take that from you. No one. God has given it to you, molded and fashioned it in you, the truth, that way, the more we live it. How much we live it, no one can take that away.

It's only by our choices that such a thing could happen. People continue to make those wrong choices, turn away from God, and lose those things. That's the only way it can be lost. No one can steal it from you. No one can deceive you and take it from you unless you let it happen, unless by your own choices you want something else and that sometimes then happens to people, sadly.

**Then all peoples shall call you blessed.** It says "nations" but it's about peoples whoever they are, wherever they are. There are going to be people in the Millennium who are going to be in awe of those who continue on and live through in a new age. Not just the 144,000. That's going to be a given. They're going to be in awe of that, of what God has done, how blessed to be a part of the 144,000 through a period of six thousand years.

But even those who live on into that age as the foundation of the Church who were called or lived through the Apostasy or were called in most cases in this particular situation, but as a matter of people to understand who you are. "You're one of them?" I mean, people are going to be dumbfounded.

Anyone who lives at that time, continuing in a physical life, just anywhere you go as a whole you're going to be known for that. People are going to be dumbfounded. You fly over to The Netherlands, you fly over to the States, you fly to Australia, where you might go on the earth, "You were one of them!" They want to hear more. I don't know if you can see that or not, but I see it very powerfully so, awesomely so.

That's why we have to have a very humble spirit in what we're getting ready to go through, that no one of pride can continue on and be in that age. Not if we're motivated primarily by pride. Because this still happens within the Church, that there are those who are highly motivated by pride and God isn't keeping them around.

**Then all nations or all people shall call you blessed.** All that you come in contact with. Incredible! **For you shall be a land of delight, says the Eternal of hosts.**

**Your words have been strong against Me,” says the Eternal, Yet you say, What have we spoken against You?** Isn't that an amazing thing? I think of people when they come down to the point of leaving, they're so justified in their minds about what they're doing, to a point where it's hard to understand how the mind flips so much to where the most basic of laws are ignored that God has given. It's a sad thing because this is the most precious thing that God has given us, the mind.

We don't take the body with us. It's the mind; it's how it grows, how it thinks. The most precious thing there is. And with the power of God's spirit there to be able to come of one mind, in unity and oneness in our thinking, that's what it's all about. That's what we want with all of our being.

**Verse 14—You have said, It is vain to serve God.** In other words, like, what value is it? To think that someone, that people have and do? Because when a person comes to the point of being disfellowshipped this is where they are. What's greater value? What's out there? That's of greater value than what God gives us here, than what we have in the mind? How can that be? How can you think that way? But that's what happens. That just shows how stupid such a thing is.

“You have said, it is vain to serve God.” “What value is there in serving God?” Like someone made a comment not too long ago, like, “I've missed out on everything. I missed out on what I really wanted to do in my life. Leave children, leave family behind, leave mate behind, leave the Church behind, and I'm going to do my thing.” How can a mind think that way? But it happens in the environment of God's Church from time to time.

**And what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances?** People can't think that through because their minds are too gone by the time when they start thinking like that. But this is the result of the actions and the thinking that has materialized over time.

**And that we have walked mournfully before the Eternal of hosts?** That we have repented, we've been repenting of sin and going through this motion. And for them, that's sadly sometimes what it is. It's not real. It's not genuine. It's not deep fellowship. It's not real. With every one of God's people, it has to be genuine and real, true.

God knows if we're true to Him when we repent, whether or not we really want help, whether or not we really want to cease from sinning, whether or not we really want to live His way.

**Even now we call the proud happy.** Sometimes that happens. This has happened in times past. I think of things that have happened in Worldwide, things that happened in Philadelphia, things that happened in Laodicea during that period, and sometimes people could see others in the Church who were filled with pride who were promoted, seemingly so, given opportunities to serve in the Church and then looked up to by others. Then others looking up to them wanting the same thing.

I've told about this one time after the Apostasy, just barely got reorganized in the Church. We hadn't even come to the full three and a half years yet. We hadn't come up to 1998 yet, Pentecost. And here in

the Detroit area, we had some women fighting over who's going to bring the cookies, who has the authority, who has the right to bring the cookies. That's really something to get in a fight about. Who is the "Chief Cookier," "Cookie," whatever it is.

I have to tell this one too. There was an individual who was, became an elder early on in the Church, and right after we were organized they used to have at the Feast of Tabernacles people that would park cars. They would have things organized where people would park cars and they would have ushers and so forth showing people where they could go and so forth. And when you get whittled down from ten thousand or four thousand to three hundred, two hundred, maybe, in the first Feast site, and you have to have people helping people park cars? Something is wrong with those people who don't know how to park their cars and find a parking spot.

Anyway, it just shows how crazy things got, that people wanted to have important positions, what they thought was important because this had been in the past and we should have greeters at the door. Just greet each other in the hall! That's what we do. We greet each other in the hall on the Sabbath. But to think someone has to stand at the door?

You know, when I first came into the Church and had nearly six hundred people in Wichita, I was blown over because I grew up in a town with less than a hundred people. Went to a high school where our graduating class was eight. Then to walk into a group of six hundred, almost six hundred people in Wichita, in that congregation when I moved there after being baptized, I was a fish out of water.

Thankfully, you start meeting people right quick. People very friendly come up to you, bring you in, here you're part of their family and your life starts changing. Incredible what takes place. But what an awesome thing to be able to have that in God's Church. But to think that we had to have, again, going back to this thing about different positions and so forth?

I'm going to get back to this. That this is what this is talking about when it speaks of the various attitudes of the proud. You see the proud. You know someone who is perhaps hard on people or whatever it might be, or hasn't been kind to people, has been very judgmental to people, acts differently around the ministry than they do the rest of the congregation—this happened a lot—and yet they got promoted. God allowed that to happen.

Sometimes people were ordained and put in places for a purpose – to learn some lessons from. I knew some, I had two training me. I learned what not to do. I learned this isn't right. That's not how you talk about people. This isn't how you treat people. Someone in the Church shouldn't be talked to in this manner or treated in this manner.

And so, you learn sometimes there are certain ways of things not to do. And yet sometimes people begin to admire that and look up to that, of different ones that were doing things wrong. I don't know if you know what I'm talking about, some of you who have been around for a long time probably do. But we

haven't had to experience that thankfully too much at all. But yet, it existed, especially up to 2012 and 2013. It was still there. There were people who were allowed to continue to serve in places that turned against Christ, became antichrist. But they were allowed to be there for a time so that people could learn from it. There are lessons there that we learn from.

So, "we call the proud happy." It's a twisted mind. It begins to think of things in a wrong way, that we see things that happen and to realize, "That's where my happiness should be, that's what I need, that's what I want, and then I'll be happier within the Church if I have 'this' or if I have 'that.'"

**Yes, they who tempt God are even delivered.** Even people then that aren't doing what they should be doing. That's why I think of Herbert Armstrong crying out like he did so often about various things and people saw various things here, that people weren't living right, weren't doing things that were right even within the ministry. Yet that can do something to the mind if people see something that's not right and yet people seem to be looked up to or elevated.

If you know something is sin, if you know something is wrong, then that's how it should be judged. Not something to be looked up to or admired or wanted for one's self. Again, it's about a twist of the mind and a thing that takes place in the mind to where a person begins to think wrong. It's a blessing to have a sound mind. It's a blessing to be blessed by God to grow in a sound mind and to have things cleansed within the Body.

That's why I've always rejoiced in the fact that no matter how hard it might be, the more that's wrong within the Body is gotten rid of the better we are, the healthier we are as a Body. Because it is a true saying, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." That's what this is partially about, to look up to people in a wrong way and not be able to judge it.

**Verse 16—However, they who fear the Eternal spoke often one to another.** Who are they? We have more of that in the Body of Christ than I've ever seen since I've been in God's Church. We are exceedingly blessed. Mainly, because we live in a time when God is helping us to see things we need to repent of more individually and collectively within the Body. That which is not looking for those things and seek those things to be changed, to grow, is being gotten rid of.

That's why I make comment—I think I made it last Sabbath—you know if someone is lying to God, not tithing properly in the Church, just leave. Save me the trouble of having to go through what I have to go through. Just leave. Sometimes people do. Because it's better for the Body, because it's hurting the Body. It's a spiritual thing and it does affect the Body. It affects the fellowship in a very negative way. I have given sermons over that.

"They who fear the Eternal." You know, fear to do wrong, wanted to keep fighting, desire to keep fighting the sin in ourselves, that's what we want. That's what the Body, as a whole, wants. I know that. The kind of fellowship we see within the Church when we go from area to area over the past year has been better

than the year before, better than the year before that. It's gotten better and better, the unity and oneness within the Body, because of growth, maturity. But that's because of where we are.

We're blessed because of that, that God is helping us to be cleansed more, working with us more fervently in that respect to accomplish this and getting rid of those things that in times past wouldn't have been gotten rid of. Because in times past there were things that happened within the church that weren't dealt with. People were given chance after chance. Even within the ministry, chance after chance after chance. They'd destroy something in one area, cause problems in one area, so they'd ship them off to another area. They'd cause the same kind of problems again because they weren't repenting so they'd ship them off to another area. That's the wrong thing to do.

So, there was sin... I'm talking about in the ministry that happened. It happened in the church as well then. People, there was a tolerance, an allowance of people. If all they had to say was, "Well, yeah, I've repented," and it's like, "Okay. It's all we ask." Then they'd be allowed to continue on in whatever they were doing. I could tell you some... No, I'm not even going to go there. There are some heinous, heinous things that were allowed within the church. God isn't allowing those things anymore because of what He's doing within the Church. That's something to be thankful for, that we're a more cleansed Body than ever before. That's why it's a joy when we go from area to area, and we see what we do because it's a spiritual thing. To see the kind of closeness, the kind of excitement that individuals have toward one another, it's a beautiful thing.

**They who feared the Eternal spoke often one to another.** Closeness, a unity, a oneness. **And the Eternal listened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them who feared the Eternal and who thought upon...** You know, it's a matter of how we think. That's what God is concerned about. It's how we think. How we think toward one another, how we think toward God. **...who thought upon His name. Then they shall be Mine, says the Eternal of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels. I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. Then as you return, or turn toward God you discern, or you will properly judge.** We'll be able to grasp things and judge things in the manner that God wants us. This, to me, is an awesome thing too.

The time period we live in right now God is teaching us things about judgment and the ability to judge in ways that I haven't seen to the same level before within the Church, to discern and grasp and comprehend certain things on a spiritual plane that has to do with judgment and how we're able to judge. It's a matter of knowing, making certain that we're doing it God's way, that we're thinking the way and judging the way God says it's to be done. We learn in that, we grow in that. There are senses, there is the mind that is able to develop and do that better, whatever it is, whatever fruit that God is pouring out, whatever it is that God is molding and fashioning. I know that is one of them in a very powerful way that God is giving to us; we're very blessed in that.

**...that you discern or properly judge between the righteous and the wicked.** So, in times past that wasn't real keen in some respects. "To judge between the righteous and the wicked." See, it shouldn't take a lot for us to grasp when someone is not at one, when there is some other things being said about a doctrine. This happened a lot in the Church where people had studied their Bible and they thought they came to understand something different than what was being taught, and they'd want to share it with some different ones. This goes back in Philadelphia. Little groups would get together and discuss them and talk about them and there was this concept you could study your own Bible and come to understand certain things and truths.

But apart from what God gives? Never. You can only seek to understand and grasp what has been given and grow in that. But to prove or to find something new? That was a concept of too many and that's not what it was all about. That's what too many in the ministry had, that they could come up with something new and different from what Herbert Armstrong had given to the Church and they could teach it in the congregations. After a time sometimes some congregations were gone because of that.

So, "to be able to judge and discern between the righteous and the wicked." We should be able to do that. We should be able to take a stand if someone comes along with a different idea. Today I feel very confident about that if someone came along with an idea about 14/15 Passover that you'd surely jump on that immediately. Some other concept, whatever it might be along similar lines concerning some doctrine or whatever.

But even about some of the crazy things that sometimes come along, some of these conspiracy theory type things or whatever. Like I've talked about the jet plumes that go across the sky, or to think it goes so far that someone would have to be put out of the Church because they think the world is flat? Man, how do you help that? You don't. You say, "Hasta la vista." Sayonara. Whatever. Goodbye because we're not on the same page.

So again here something to be able to grow in, to be able to judge between the righteous and the wicked. Sometimes people have a difficulty within that within the Church. There are times that I have to come to a choice and a decision that this is time for someone to be suspended or to be disfellowshipped. There are some others who feel bad about it sometimes because they don't see the same thing. Why? Well, that's what each person has to ask when that happens.

Why do you feel badly when someone is not able to be a part of the Body anymore? Shouldn't it say if there is sin being done and it's for serious enough reason to be put away from the Body that there is a way we should think about that then? See, I do. I'm not happy that I had to do it. I hate to see them make the decisions and the choices they made. I hate it. But to allow it to continue on? No. Not going to happen. Because the Body will be better for it. And they, hopefully in time, will come to see what they did. But I know in most cases they never will. Never will in most cases.

That's why this concept we used to have in the Great White Throne everybody is going to have the chance to be saved... Well, choices are going to be there, but will people choose that? Not going to happen. That's why there are so many at the very end it talks about, so many as the sand of the sea who are destroyed. That's mind-boggling. But that shouldn't be in Elohim, and it shouldn't be in God's Church if we understand.

We rest on that and rejoice in that. Sometimes people don't rejoice in the fact that someone has been separated from the Body that is hurting the Body. That's too bad. Because we should. Not because of the decision and the choice they made, but the fact that they've been separated, and the distinction has been made they are not a part of the Body.

They are antichrist. They have turned against the very one through whom we have the forgiveness of sins. The very one who was beaten beyond recognition, the very one who had a spear rammed into his side and blood spilled out to the earth so that we could be forgiven of sin so we could have this way of life and live it. That kind of sacrifice? And to turn against everything that God has given to us, not a small thing. Not a small thing.

Malachi 4. So, it continues the flow through Malachi here. Well, I didn't finish that sentence.

**Malachi 3:18—Then as you return, or turn toward God, you discern or you will properly judge,** as it is in Hebrew, **between the righteous and the wicked,** between those who serve God and those who do not serve Him. And if there is that which is not serving God, it doesn't belong here. God has long patience with that, gives people many opportunities to change, to grow, to conquer, and overcome.

**Malachi 4:1—For behold, the day is coming that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly shall be stubble.** It's what it's talking about, the end of that Hundred Years. **The day that comes shall burn them up, says the Eternal of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you who fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.** So, referring to Christ as our Passover, our High Priest, and not saying the Son of God but as the sun, the brightness, the power that's there, the magnificence of something we can see on a physical plane that is that power that comes from him, that gives the ability for us to be healed in the mind. Most awesome thing that can happen to human beings is to be healed in the mind. That's what happens when we're impregnated with God's spirit, and we have that transformation take place in our minds. Awesome!

"Arise with healing in his wings." Power to heal our minds. We all need our minds healed from selfish, carnal nature.

**And you shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall, and you shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, says the Eternal of hosts.**

So, there is that part that is so hard for us as human beings sometimes, to come to that point where

we're able to recognize that not everyone will want this way of life, not everyone chooses this way of life.

No matter how well we know them, no matter how much we might have loved them or do love them, some of that has to begin to change in this point in time where we come to a point where we're able to make a distinction and say, "I know that there are things that can't be allowed into Elohim, and if I can grasp that then I know there are things that cannot really be allowed to endure for a long time within the Church of God, within the Body of Christ," and be in agreement with that and to recognize that.

There is a sadness in the choices that people make, but you can't change that. You can't change that in them. You can't save them. Neither should you if they're in that and choose that, which is opposite of God, if it's antichrist. No effort should be made. We still have some situations in times where some want to get a hold of or get in contact with some who have been put out and to share various things. That's wrong. It's like you're going to try to bring them back by your influence. You can't do that. It's a spiritual matter.

When someone is separated from the Body of Christ they're gone unless they repent and come to the Church. That's the process they have to go through. We're not going to save anyone individually because of a relationship that we have. Does that make sense? Because that's what we have to come to. That's a part of coming into agreement with God, that His judgment is righteous.

I had to make that choice a long, long time ago in family when I knew that some had left the Church. I went through a lot of anguish because of things we thought back then even more so than we see now. We understand it better now by far. But to understand that if someone doesn't repent, if someone doesn't want God, if they want something different, they're not going to be there, and all they will have is this physical life. That's their choice.

I didn't like to see them make that choice. It hurt to think they made it. Hurt inside, deeply, that they made such a choice to not be with God's apostle and to go with someone else, his son who had to be disfellowshipped, who started a different organization against God. That's what it was, it was an organization to pull others out of the Church of God. At that time, that was, candidly, one of the most hideous things that Satan was doing. That was a power. That's the power behind it. Led up to in time the Apostasy.

And so, we all have to come to that point where our allegiance, our love, our desire is for God and God's Church and God's Family, and the unity and oneness we're going to have within it, and that it has to be one that has righteousness living in it, dwelling in it. And if it doesn't have that, if someone doesn't want that why should they be given that? Well, they're not going to be, and that's the point. That's God's judgment.

I'm saying this because this is a hard thing for a lot of people to get a hold of sometimes within the Church. It has been in times past, and I know that in some situations I've seen it pop up its ugly head at times. Because it's ugly to think that we want someone back. If they repent. But my experience is that it happens so seldom...so, so seldom if at all. That's something you have to decide in your own mind then, how to deal with that no matter who it is.

**Malachi 4:1** again, **For behold, the day is coming that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud... That means going to hold on to one's own way, not fully accepting God's, to be obedient to God. ...and all who do wickedly shall be stubble. And the day comes that shall burn them, says the Eternal of hosts, that shall leave them neither root nor branch,** as it says.

**But unto you who fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. And you shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall. You shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this.** It's a pretty drastic picture to think of ones we have loved to be ashes under our feet. But God wants us to understand that, that that is His judgment, that that is the end, when it's a matter of something that is physical.

He's going to do it in the spirit realm. That's an incredible thing to understand. In the Church, we didn't comprehend this because our concept was that Satan and the demonic world have to live forever and ever and ever because they're made out of spirit. The reality is God created things in a spirit world and He can destroy things in a spirit world. He has that power. The same thing is true in a physical world, even so much more so, of those who had the opportunity of God's way of life and don't want it, that's a choice. You can't give it to anyone.

That's a powerful test sometimes in people's lives. Do we love God and God's way of life and His purpose and His plan and His judgments and see the importance of it and why it has to be that way? I think oftentimes about how Herbert Armstrong made it so clear that God knew, God from the very beginning, this purpose of things He created, that no one could be trusted save God, Elohim. We have to become of that mind, to be of that mind forever and ever and ever.

The angelic realm was never given that. They were only made spirit and had truth that God revealed to them, and they lived, as a whole, two-thirds lived by that. But one-third chose not to. It's harder in this physical life. It's easier to go astray and not receive what God offers us. Because it's greater and we have to understand that it's greater, what God is offering. So, indeed, more is required, far more than what was ever required in the angelic realm.

**Remember the law of My servant, Moses, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Eternal.** And so, we understand those things having to do with that duality there as I mentioned earlier about John the Baptist.

**He shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.**

You know, in the Church we used to think that this had to do with how children are raised in the church. That's important, that children are reared properly. But that's why primarily the momentum was to have what we called Y.E.S. classes where young people were given material, booklets, and so forth to learn from and classes within the church. Then later on as they got older, they went into what was called Y.O.U., Youth Opportunities United, and we had volleyball teams, basketball teams, and all kinds of organized things within the environment of the Church. This was a lot of the momentum for that.

But not understanding what this was about spiritually, that it's about our minds toward everything that God has taught through time to our forefathers, whether starting with Abel all the way up through, Noah, Moses, the prophets, and so forth. To understand here that's what it's talking about. It's about the heart. It's about the mind. It's how we think, and it's about the power that God has to turn our hearts to them, to what was taught by them, because it comes from God.

Let's turn over to Leviticus 27. Again, these are very basic things but need to go over them. **Leviticus 27:30—Even all the tithe of the land, and the seed of the land, and the fruit of the tree, is the Eternal's.** Well, it's the Eternal's anyway. Everything is God's. But He's showing us our part when He works with us on a physical plane like this with a nation or with us within the Church.

So, it says, "all the tithe." So, in this part here it says it is set apart in that respect for holy use and purpose. It's a matter of attitude of mind. This is not mine to have. All the rest (that is still God's) is mine to have that God is giving me, but this is God's and it's to be treated as holy.

We're to treat the Sabbath as holy. We're to set it apart for holy use and purpose. Each one of us, if we grasp that, and this is even exceedingly important within the Church, has been sanctified, set apart for holy use and purpose. And if we understand that within the Body then we're going to have an attitude of mind that is unique toward each other in the Body as we do toward God because it's a matter of what God says.

To God, you're set apart for holy use and purpose. That's an awesome thing. The power of God is in your mind. God's spirit is in your mind to work with you, to mold and fashion you. And so, how we think toward one another becomes a matter of our attitude and thinking toward God, not just about one another on a physical plane like we would in the world. So again, those things are powerful if we grasp them.

And so, now it's talking about this tithe, and it's about an attitude of mind toward God. If God says something is to be sanctified, set apart as holy, then it should have some bearing then obviously on how we think about it. See, that's why it boggles my mind when I know that there are people who have not kept first tithe, when some aren't doing it properly. Still happening!

**...the fruit of the tree is the Eternals, holy to the Eternal. If a man wants at all to redeem any of the tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it.** I'm not going to get into all of this, what it's all about, but I'll maybe mention some. **Yet concerning the tithe of the herd or of the flock, even whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy, in other words, set apart for holy use unto the Eternal. He shall not search whether it is good or bad, and neither shall he change it out. If he at all changes one out then both it and the one exchanged shall be holy.** This gets a little more complicated in detail of things they did at that particular time. I don't want to spend time on it because it's far, far from what we do. We tithe, obviously then, on increase that we have through our jobs or business or whatever it might be.

And so, they had a process back then where there were certain things they could redeem for themselves or whatever. There is a process they could go through in some of these cases if something, especially if it wasn't—and I read that last Sabbath—of a particular quality.

**These are the commandments which the Eternal commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.** So again, it's all about our attitude in thinking, and that's what God was giving to them in helping to reveal they didn't have good thinking. They were very carnal. And understandably so. They didn't have God's spirit. What's amazing, we have God's spirit, and yet we have these kinds of things on a spiritual plane that have happened over and over and over again within the Church a lot.

So again, God wants us to recognize that tithes are to be seen as holy. It's how He starts teaching some things to us in our mind about how we think. He does that with the Sabbath, how we treat the Sabbath, how we think about the Sabbath, and on it goes.

Let's turn over to Numbers 18. Add to that. God makes it very clear there are different tithes. **Numbers 18:20—Then the Eternal said to Aaron, You shall have no inheritance in the land, neither shall you have any part among them. I am your part and your inheritance among the children of Israel.** So again, that's what the tithe was about for them, it was about the Levite and how it was to be administered to them.

**I have given the children of Levi all the tenth of Israel.** So, others were given land. The Levites weren't. They were given the tithe and the way to be administered then among them. **...the children of Levi all the tenth of Israel for an inheritance for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.** In other words, the place of the commanded assembly.

So, they had so many of them at times there then they had to divide it up into only a couple weeks in the year that they served at their round, at their particular time within their family. And yet they were to be recognized as being separated from the rest of Israel in a different and a unique way of what God was doing with them as a matter of the temple.

It's taking me a little longer to go through some of this. Let's go over to Hebrews 6. So again, big change. Big change from how they observed first tithe and how the Church observed first tithe, and then even

when we grasp second tithe, not as big a change but still a big change in the things that were administered and how things were done and how society has changed. We're not agrarian societies anymore like we were at that time. That's in the minority now within the Church. Everyone has different kinds of jobs and so forth and it's not necessarily taking care of livestock and raising crops and so forth and selling them. So, we used to have more of that within the church but today we have very little that I can think of. So, it's a matter of the amount of income that a person makes within a year and the tithe upon that after taxes have been taken out.

So, Hebrews 6. There are some things here that had to be addressed concerning some of this then and this is where a lot of this is done in the book of Hebrews as far as the Church is concerned. **Hebrews 6:13 —For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could give oath by no one greater, He gave oath according to Himself, saying, Surely in blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.** It's incredible here how this relationship is noted. Even as it speaks about the offering of Cain and Abel, and then later on here we have Abraham, and some of the things that are taught here as far as tithes and offerings and so forth, but this is being addressed here in the book of Hebrews.

**...saying, In blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you. So, after he had patiently endured, in other words, persevered, he obtained the promise. For men indeed give oath by what is greater, for an oath given by them for confirmation ends all disputes.** Again, pretty hard language to go through what it's discussing here, but it's leading up to talking about a change that was made as far as the priesthood. And because a priesthood was made, so a change was made even in the Levitical system as far as tithes were concerned.

**So, wherein God desiring to more greatly show the heirs of promise the immutability, in other words, the unchangeableness or the unalterableness of His counsel...** In other words, when God says something, that's it. That's basically what it's showing here, whatever God gives. ... **confirmed it by an oath.** So, he's saying here, he's showing here to those of the Church if you will, the power of His word, His counsel, that by two things, the fact that He confirmed it by an oath—God's word is true—**and also it's impossible for God to lie.** So, two things here. It's all He had to give as a matter of showing here that yes, it's true. He's just stating some things as a matter of law here.

So, it says, **we might have strong consolation, who have fled to refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.** What an awesome thing, we're given an opportunity to lay hold of what God's given us.

**This hope we have as an anchor to our life, both sure and steadfast.** You know, we read over things like this so quickly but it's a matter of you want to hold on to something, you have to hold on to it with all your being, truly. If you want to hold on to this way of life, you've got to fight for it. This is something that doesn't just happen easily; it's something you've got to determine to do throughout your life in the Church.

...as an anchor to our life, both sure and steadfast, in which enters the presence behind the veil. So, again here, it's saying behind that veil, before God's throne. What an incredible thing we have before God to be able to do that, to know that every time you're doing something that others in the world can't do and never have been able to do.

**Verse 20—Where the forerunner has entered for us, even Joshua having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.** To the manner, the order of Melchizedek. I think, what an awesome thing, 2005 we came to understand what this was all about, Melchizedek, that it's about God Almighty and the way that He chose to reveal Himself to Abraham and chose in different ways to reveal Himself to Abraham. This is one occasion where He gave something as an example of something that was going to be accomplished later on. To Abraham, he only knew Melchizedek as being the priest of God.

There are other examples here of the fact that he understood that this is God. It goes on to say here then, **Hebrews 7:1—For this Melchizedek, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.** So, it was at this point here that Abraham determined, it mentions here, of giving a tithe of everything that he had there to God.

**To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated King of Righteousness,** speaking of Melchizedek, **and then King of Salem,** King of Peace, meaning King of Peace, **without father and without mother, without genealogy.** So, it's making it very clear here that it was God. Melchizedek had no father, had no mother, had no genealogy. Not talking about physical human beings. **...without having either beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto, made like the Son of God.**

Incredible that God chose to reveal Himself in a way that was going to be fulfilled later on in Christ, a High Priest forever for the Church, for Elohim, for the people of God that God would work with. And so He revealed Himself to Abraham in this manner, foreshadowing something that would happen later on.

**...made like the Son of God, remains (abides) a priest continually forever. Now, consider how great this to whom even the patriot,** it says "man" but that's not in the scripture. **Now, consider how great this to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils and the best of his spoils.**

So again here, we're going to stop there today.

But anyway, what an awesome thing to even understand who Melchizedek is. Philadelphia never understood. Laodicea never understood. Incredible what God's given to us that we can grasp and comprehend this is all about God and what He established in Christ and everything that Christ fulfills. High Priest. It's about God's priests. Awesome.

Anyway, we'll continue on in this next Sabbath.